

DISTRICT CREMATORIUM IS ONE OF THE MOST MODERN AND BEST EQUIPPED IN COUNTRY

Municipal Institution at Which Bodies Are Cremated Has Ghoulish and Mournful Effect on Visitors—How It Operates.

By R. W. BENTON.

There is a feeling of dread and horror which pulses through the average man when he contemplates the dead. He is reminded of the ephemeral nature of this mundane existence, and there awakens within him a realization that, ere long he, too, must join—

"The innumerable unseen that move To that superior realm where each shall take His chamber in the silent halls of Death."

Death, murders, graveyards, and undertakers are not pleasant themes for thought; yet every man in his time turns toward them in his musings with a kind of strange and ghoulish delight. They are subjects surrounded by an atmosphere of mystery, and man's mind loves to delve into the nebulous. Despite their mournfulness, these themes have their distinctive charms, and the story of a homicide, or the suicide of a star-crossed lover, or the details of a dread catastrophe will ever catch the public eye and interest thousands.

Morgue Place of Horror.

The morgue is an accepted place of horror, and the word itself brings weird and mysterious thoughts to the mind. There is another institution closely associated with this house of the dead which has fully as ghoulish a function to perform, but which receives only slight attention. There are but few persons who know the existence of a District crematorium, and those who are aware of the fact in no wise associate it with the morgue. The two institutions work in conjunction, and a large per cent of the bodies which for a while rest in the narrow confines of the ice chest in the mortuary chamber are placed in the oven of the crematorium at the Capital's cremation plant.

The crematorium stands not far from the banks of the Eastern Branch among a group of the municipality's most repulsive institutions—the jail, the old workhouse, the quarantine station, the lazaretto, and the potter's field. It is said that the building is located at Twentieth and B Streets Southeast, but it is difficult for the visitor to corroborate the assertion, because of the irregularity of the highways in the neighborhood.

Difficult to Locate.

The chances are that the person who visits the institution for the first time will have a difficult time locating it. He will probably be directed to take the Pennsylvania Avenue car, and when he alights near the Congressional Cemetery will be unable to find the way who has never heard of the crematorium. If he is persistent and walks north past the cemetery and the jail, after a rough and dusty jaunt of more than a mile, he may reach the building, but it is difficult to find the entrance. If he is better acquainted with the lay of the land in that section, he will take the Lincoln Park car and ride to the terminus. He will then trudge south to B Street, turn eastward, and the houses gradually become scattered, and finally are left behind. There is nothing but desolate commons on all sides. Thirteenth Street is reached, and this marks the boundary of any semblance of civic improvement. Beyond this point B Street slopes downward toward the Eastern Branch. It is a street, not a road, and is not a very rough one. Ruts, ditches, bowlders, and weeds mark the course of the highway. For several years the Commissioners have been urged to grade the road, so far no action has been taken. Some day a hearse will turn turtle, and then the Commissioners may see fit to spend a trivial amount on the repair of the road.

Is Small Building.

Beyond the wide expanse of marsh land, veiled with a heavy mist, the waters of the Eastern Branch may be seen winding among the bending reeds, with a sputtering motor boat or a tiny rail here and there. To the right of the road, past the high jail wall, is a small building, situated in the midst of a great greenward, surrounded by a wire fence. The structure is pebble-dashed, with stately white wooden columns, giving an effect of finish to the ornamentation. Over the large white door is carved the one word "Crematorium." A gravel road leads between the green lawn to the door.

The municipal crematorium was erected just four years ago, being placed in operation October 1, 1908. Prior to that time there was no public institution of its kind in the city. All of the cremations were then held at the private plant of J. William Lee, the undertaker. Mr. Lee's crematorium is still in operation, the two being the only ones in Washington. The public crematorium is one of the best equipped in the country.

Most of the bodies cremated at the institution are received from the morgue. Many private cremations are held, however. In accordance with an act of Congress, approved April 23, 1902, a fee of \$10 is charged in all cases where the estate or the family of the decedent is able to pay the cost of disposing of the remains.

Large Chapel in Building.

The main portion of the crematorium is occupied by the chapel. The room will accommodate a large number of persons. As well as the rest of the interior of the building, it is finished in white, giving an immaculate appearance. The room is well lighted. At one end is a high, white pulpit, which rather resembles a judge's bench. The chapel is used very seldom—only in occasional cases of private cremations. Services over the bodies received from the morgue are formerly held in it, but because of the inconvenience caused by the presence of the bodies, they are now conducted at the morgue. Due to the efforts of Rev. Dr. Simon P. W. Drew, pastor of Cosmopolitan Temple Baptist Church, and other colored clergymen, a Christian burial is now given everybody.

Perhaps a chapel service is desired. The hearse moves slowly down the rough road before the crematorium, turns up the gravel way, and stops at the door of the structure. The door of the hearse is opened, and the somber casket is lifted from the motor vehicle to the entrance of the building. With slow and measured step the minister advances into the chapel, followed by the casket truck, reading that impressive passage from the ritual which begins:

Reads Solemn Service.

"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

The truck is rolled to the base of the pulpit. The minister ascends the platform and continues the service, while the

mourners sit quietly in the chairs grouped in a semi-circle about him. As the last words of the preacher die away and deep silence hangs over the place of the dead, folding doors in the lower part of the pulpit open, and the truck containing the casket is rolled through. As it disappears in the corridor adjoining the chapel, the white doors swing shut, preventing the mourners from seeing the actual cremation of the body.

In case the chapel services are not desired, the truck is rolled down the maculate corridor past the door of the chapel to a point in back of the pulpit. Here is the door of the mortuary destructor. The folding doors leading under the pulpit can also be seen. When the body passes through these doors, under the platform upon which the minister stands, it is at the very mouth of the oven of destruction.

The destructor is built in the wall of the structure. The door to the oven opens upon the corridor. At the side of it is a door which leads into a room containing the destructor proper. The cremation apparatus consists of a compartment for the body about seven feet long and three feet wide. This is three or four feet from the ground. Directly beneath it is a compartment of similar size. Two small pipes lead to the head of each of these chambers. The two

stop-cocks of the pipe leading to the upper compartment are turned on, and the spray is ignited with a piece of flaming cotton waste. With a roar, a hot, blue flame leaps from the jet. This flame plays directly upon the head of the body in the oven. The gases of decomposition pass from the oven into the lower compartment, where the white flames consume them. Although the gases of decomposition are of the most offensive odor, they can never be detected at the crematorium. They are entirely consumed in the lower compartment.

In an adjoining room is located a small electric motor, which operates the air and oil compressor and the air-blower. The coal oil and air are each kept at a pressure of about fifteen pounds. The compressor is small, and it is difficult to get a much higher pressure. If a pressure of twenty-five pounds could be maintained, much quicker cremations could be made. The flame from the upper burner should be a dark blue, but because of the low pressure it is rather a yellowish color. A higher stack would make quicker cremations possible. The present stack is about twenty-five or thirty feet from the ground.

Window in Destructor.

At the side of the upper compartment is a circular window, with an iron shutter. By opening the shutter the condition of the flame may be noticed. The angle of vision is not very large, and when the body is first placed in, just the chin and a portion of the mouth of the person may be seen. The spray suddenly bursts into flame, and the blaze may be seen licking over the head. If a person continues to look through the window, in a short time the chin will gradually disappear, and nothing will be seen but the roaring flame. The body is eaten down from head to foot, like a candle. It is estimated that the temperature in the compartment is between 2,000 and 4,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Ordinarily, it requires twenty-seven

gallons of coal oil to cremate the body of an adult. This oil is drawn from a 20-gallon tank buried just outside the building. When several cremations are held the same day, the last can be accomplished much more quickly and with the use of less oil than the first, on account of the destructor being well heated. The heat of the destructor is not transmitted outside. The hand may be comfortably placed on the outside of the oven. A double metal wall, with twenty-four inches of air space between, makes this condition possible.

Takes Hour and a Half.

It requires about an hour and a half or two hours to cremate the body of an adult. The time depends much on the atmospheric conditions and the temperature of the destructor. If a stiff breeze is blowing outside, causing a strong draft in the stack, the cremation can be performed in much less time on a windless summer day.

When the superintendent thinks the body is about consumed, he cautiously opens the door of the oven. If he hears a sizzling, crackling sound, he knows that the body is not entirely consumed; but if, on the other hand, all is silent, he prepares to collect the ashes. These are gathered together by means of a long-handled broom and an iron rake. They are swept into a dustpan and poured into a cylindrical earthen jar. If the cremation is private, these ashes are immediately turned over to relatives.

There is a large room in one corner of the crematorium where human ashes are stored. The walls are lined with shelves, upon which are rows and rows of the drab-colored jars. These receptacles are about eight inches in diameter and about six inches high. The ashes of an adult will fill one about two-thirds. The remains are pure white. Many pieces of bone may be discovered among them. If a person takes one of these bones in his hand, it will crumble into dust at the slightest pressure of the fingers. Before burial the ashes are all

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FACTS AND FIGURES ON DISTRICT'S CREMATORIUM

Best equipped institution of its kind in the country. Situated near Eastern Branch, amidst group of municipality's most repulsive institutions.

Established in October, 1908. Ernest Bishop the superintendent.

Two thousand seven hundred and forty-five bodies cremated since establishment.

Five hundred and ninety-three bodies reduced to ashes during last fiscal year.

Coal oil and compressed air used to produce destructive flames.

Temperature between 3,000 and 4,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Takes twenty-seven gallons of oil to consume adult's body.

Requires from one hour and a half to two hours. Absolutely no odor detectable.

Ashes of unclaimed bodies stored in jars until called for. Pulverized ashes of adult will not fill a quart bottle.

Between fifteen and twenty babies burned each week.

Iron stretcher. The ponderous iron doors of the oven are opened. A lever is turned and an inner door slowly rises. The stretcher is rolled into the compartment and the body is shuffled off. As soon as the stretcher is removed the doors are closed.

Spray Is Ignited.

The stop-cocks of the pipe leading to the upper compartment are turned on, and the spray is ignited with a piece of flaming cotton waste. With a roar, a hot, blue flame leaps from the jet. This flame plays directly upon the head of the body in the oven. The gases of decomposition pass from the oven into the lower compartment, where the white flames consume them. Although the gases of decomposition are of the most offensive odor, they can never be detected at the crematorium. They are entirely consumed in the lower compartment.

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ways pulverized. After this is done the ashes will hardly fill the earthen jar one-quarter.

Labels on Jars.

Upon each jar on the shelves is a label telling where the body was found and when it was cremated. These remains are kept in the crematorium with the hope that a relative or friend may eventually call to claim them. But few of the ashes are ever called for. If, after a certain length of time, the remains are unclaimed, they are taken to the potter's field on the banks of the Eastern Branch, just behind the old female workhouse, and buried in the masses of unidentified bodies received from the morgue. Unidentified bodies are never cremated, but are buried, so that they may be distinguished in case a friend or relative should call to claim them.

One of the rooms is equipped to preserve bodies overnight, in case they should arrive too late for cremation on the day of arrival. This room is a large, light table which slants downward. The body is placed on the incline, over which flows a continuous stream of water. The superintendent has never had occasion to use the apparatus, and it is expected that it will soon be removed, so that the room may be utilized for other purposes.

The superintendent of the crematorium is Ernest Bishop, a young man who is excellently qualified for the position. Mr. Bishop has been at the head of the institution for four years, entering upon the work about a month after the building was formally opened. He has had wide experience in the handling of mechanisms similar to that employed at the crematorium. Mr. Bishop is at the institution daily from 9 o'clock in the morning until 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Many Bodies Cremated.

During the fiscal year ended June 30 last 538 bodies were cremated at the institution. Since the establishment of the crematorium, 2,746 bodies have been reduced to ashes. For the year 1908-9, 625 bodies were burned. The next year 527 bodies were cremated. Six hundred and ninety-four bodies were burned during the year 1910-11.

Between fifteen and twenty infants are cremated every week. There are usually placed in the destructor at the same time. Most of the babies come from the morgue and the city's hospitals.

One of the most common cases is usually in the spring and fall," said Mr. Bishop yesterday afternoon. "At these seasons we receive a great many tubercular cases. Many infants are also burned at these times."

DANCING QUEENS.

The King is not greatly addicted to dancing, and when he attends a ball his majesty usually plays bridge during the early part of the evening.

When the time arrives for escorting his hostess to supper, Queen Mary, on the other hand, is a fond of dancing. Her majesty went out a great deal into society with her mother, the late Duchess Teck, when she was young, and has always been a devotee of the ballroom. In short, she is a perfect dancer, and has always been the cynosure of all eyes when dancing gracefully round a ballroom with a chosen partner and invariably dressed to perfection.

Of course, in a company it would not be etiquette for any one to dance while the Queen or the Princess of Wales is taking the floor.

Indeed, it seems as though each Queen of England is in her turn descended from a royal ancestor who was a dancer, and who, in her widowhood, enjoyed nothing so much as a good dance, while Queen Alexandra, in spite of the disadvantages attendant on a stiff knee, still waits to perfection and has always been the cynosure of all eyes when dancing gracefully round a ballroom with a chosen partner and invariably dressed to perfection.

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Physician Traces Taint of Insanity

Specific Case of Influence of Heredity Is Cited by Well-known Doctor—Five Generations Are Included in Investigation.

The following has been contributed by the Medical Society of the District of Columbia.

When Martin Kallikak, sr., of a good family, was a boy of fifteen his father died, leaving him without parental care or oversight. Just before attaining his majority the young man joined one of the numerous military companies that were formed to protect the country at the beginning of the Revolution. At one of the taverns frequented by the militia he met a feeble-minded girl, by whom he became the father of a feeble-minded son. This child was given by his mother the name of the father, and was christened Martin Kallikak, jr., the great-grandfather of the present subject.

Among the descendants of the feeble-minded girl, and from him have come 60 descendants. One hundred and thirty-three of these, who have conclusive proof, were or are feeble-minded, while only forty-six have been found normal. The rest are unknown or doubtful.

Among these 60 descendants 24 have been illegitimate. There have been thirty-three sexually immoral persons, mostly prostitutes. There have been twenty-four confirmed alcoholics.

There have been three epileptics. Eighty-two died in infancy. Three were criminal.

Eighty-two houses of ill-fame.

All Have Intermarried.

These people have married into other families, generally of about the same type, so that now there are on record and charted 1,188 individuals.

Of this large group, 282 were feeble-minded, while 100 are considered normal. The remaining 806 are of undetermined mind. ("Undetermined," as here employed, means they are people we can scarcely recognize as normal.)

The author traces each descendant of Martin Kallikak, sr., and a ghastly story of degeneracy is revealed. Although Martin himself paid no further notice to the girl, nor her children, society has had to pay the heavy price of all the evil he engendered.

On leaving the Revolutionary army, Martin married a respectable girl of good family, and through that union has come another line of descendants of radically different character. These now number 46 in direct descent. All of them are of a good family, and most of them have been found among them who were somewhat degenerate, but they were not defective. Two of these were alcoholic, and the other sexually loose.

All of the legitimate children of Martin, sr., married into the best families of their State, the descendants of colonial governors, signers of the Declaration of Independence, soldiers and statesmen, and the founders of a great university. In this family and its collateral branches are only representative citizens, doctors, lawyers, judges, educators, traders, landholders in short, men and women prominent in every phase of social life.

The Other Side.

They have scattered over the United States, and are prominent in their communities wherever they have gone. Half a dozen towns in New Jersey are named after the family, and in Wisconsin descendants have married. There have been no feeble-minded among them, no illegitimate children, no immoral women; only one man was sexually loose. There has been no criminality, no alcoholism, no keepers of houses of prostitution. Only fifteen children have died in infancy.

There has been one "insane," a case of epilepsy, and one of tuberculosis. The appetite for strong drink has been present here and there in this family from the beginning. It was in Martin, sr., and was cultivated at a time when such

practices were common everywhere. But while the other branch of the family has had twenty-four victims of habitual drunkenness, this side scores only two.

Feeble-mindedness, the price hundreds of people have paid for old Martin Kallikak's momentary indiscretion, makes paupers and criminals. Taxpayers, "the ultimate consumers," pay a great price, not in heredity but in dollars.

It is high time, the author recognizes the tragedy of feeble-mindedness. It is difficult to appeal to man's love for his fellow-man in taking up a great question, but when his pocketbook is touched he evinces interest.

Let him therefore reflect on these facts. Dr. Goddard says that at least 25 per cent of criminals are feeble-minded. One hundred admissions to the Reformatory (N. J.) Reformatory, taken in order of admission, show at least 26 per cent of them distinctly feeble-minded, with the certainty that the percentage would be much higher if they were included the borderline cases.

Mentally Defective.

Out of 100 children in the Detention Home of Newark, N. J., 67 per cent are distinctly feeble-minded. Of 56 girls from a Massachusetts reformatory out on probation, 32 of them are distinctly feeble-minded. This was partially a selection of group, the basis being their troublesomeness.

The superintendent of Elmira Reformatory estimates 40 per cent of his inmates are mentally defective, and it is believed fully 50 per cent of the inmates of most penal institutions are feeble-minded. A large percentage of prostitutes are mental defectives.

The Kallikak family presents a natural experiment in heredity. A young man of good family becomes, through two different women, the ancestor of two lines of descendants—the one characterized by thoroughly good, respectable, normal citizenship, with almost no exceptions; the other being equally characterized by mental defect in every generation. This defect was transmitted through the father in the first generation. In the later generations more defect was brought in from other families through marriage. In the last generation it was transmitted through the mother, so that we have here all combinations of transmission, which again proves the truly hereditary character of the defect.

We find on the good side of the family prominent people in all walks of life, and nearly all of the 400 descendants owners of land or property. On the bad side we find paupers, criminals, prostitutes, drunkards, and examples of all forms of social pest with which modern society is burdened.

Is Heredity Taint.

From this we conclude that feeble-mindedness is largely responsible for these social evils. Feeble-mindedness is hereditary, and transmitted as surely as any other character. We cannot successfully cope with these conditions until we recognize feeble-mindedness and its hereditary character, and recognize it early and take care of it.

The public conscience must be aroused to the evils attendant upon feeble-mindedness, so that the subject could be treated fearfully and firmly.

Sterilization of criminals and mental defectives of all classes is logical, sensible, and effective. The operation is trivial and harmless and absolutely prevents procreation. If this were to be carried out, many of our institutions could be closed, our criminal classes would be diminished, epileptics, inebriates, and the various types of persons of deficient mentality would be startlingly less, and society would eventually be raised to a higher plane.

Eight States, or one-sixth of those in the Union, have enacted laws calling for the sterilization of certain prescribed persons.

Suffragists Are Joyful.

Joy reigned in the suffragist camps throughout the country. The leaders are enthusiastic over the present situation, and while they admit the election of any Presidential candidate they may support will not result in equal suffrage throughout the country, they claim that the recognition of the movement by the big political parties will have a strong moral effect on hastening the constitutional amendments in the various States throughout the Union, providing for equal suffrage.

The attitude of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in the coming campaign will be strictly nonpartisan, according to the Woman's Journal, the official organ of the organization. It claims that the association will work for no man or no party at the polls, but will try to defeat its enemies. Thus the friendly attitude of the party leaders.

Despite this declaration of the national organization many of its most prominent members are openly working for the "Bull Moose" party, attracted, no doubt, by the woman suffrage plank. Miss Jane Addams, one of the pioneers in this organization, seconded Col. Roosevelt's nomination at the convention of the Progressive party in Chicago.

Besides the six States which have already granted equal suffrage, there are four States in which this question will be submitted to the voters in the fall election, namely, Oregon, Kansas, Michigan, and Wisconsin. On September 3, Ohio will decide this question, and it votes on the adoption of its new constitution.

Proof Positive.

From Judge Crawford—Do you think he's benedictine?

Crabapple—He never mentioned it, but I've noticed that the portraits over his mantelpiece are those of his wife's folks.

SETTLE BITTER FIGHT OVER HEIRS TO MILLIONS



MRS. ANDREW MELLON AND HER CHILDREN.

Pittsburg, Pa., Sept. 14.—An attorney for Andrew W. Mellon, the multimillionaire banker, confirmed a report that the long, bitter fight over the custody of the Mellon children had been amicably settled. The father is to have the children eight months of the year, and the mother four months. During the fight, Mrs. Mellon, who is many years the junior of the banker, was used for divorce, Mr. Mellon naming George O. Crowder, a British army officer. A divorce was granted Mellon on the ground of desertion. It is claimed that one of the conditions demanded from the wife when the banker withdrew proceedings in which he charged his wife with improper conduct, was that she was not to contest the new suit. He then filed a suit charging her with desertion. A master was appointed to take the testimony, after Mrs. Mellon waived all right to a jury trial. All records of the case have been removed from the court files, permission being granted for this by the court, and the documents with the sensational allegations against the wife are now in the possession of attorneys for the banker. Mrs. Mellon is now making her home with her mother in England.

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"The one thing," Peter said, "is connected with the duchesse. It was she, of her own will, who decided to come to America. I believe that but for her coming, Bernadine and the prince would have waited in their own country. Money can flash from America to England over the wires. It does not need to be fetched. They have still one fear. It is connected with the duchesse. Let me think."

Peter stopped abruptly. "I find this motion most unpleasant," he said. "I am going to bed. To-night I cannot think. To-morrow, promise you, we will solve this. Hush!"

He held out his hand and drew his companion back into the shadow of a lifeboat. A tall figure was approaching them along the deck. As he passed the little ray of light thrown out from the smoking room, the man's features were clearly visible. It was the prince. He was walking like one